MATTER 4: Abingdon and Oxford Fringe Sub Area

(Note: This matter includes site specific issues)

HEARING STATEMENT on behalf of Arnold White Estates Ltd

Examination of Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031: Part 2 - Detailed Policies and Additional Sites

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Gardner Planning Ltd

Down Ampney
Bendlowes Road
Great Bardfield
Essex
CM7 4RR

07887 662166
geoff@gardnerplanning.com

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This is a Hearing **Statement** submitted to the Inspector holding the Part 2 Examination of the Vale of White Horse **Local Plan** (**LPP2**) 2031 in July 2018. It is submitted by Gardner Planning Ltd (**GPL**) on behalf or Arnold White Estates Ltd (**AWEL**) which is a development promoter with land interests in The Vale of White Horse (**VWH**) District**.** GPL/AWEL made a detailed response to the LPP2 Publication Version on 20.11.17**.**

1.2 This Statement responds to the Inspector's List of Matters and Questions (15.5.18) which are a starting point for the round-table hearing session.

2.0 QUESTION 4.1

Other than Dalton Barracks (Matter 5), are the housing allocations listed in Policy 8a the most appropriate when considered against reasonable alternatives in the light of site constraints, infrastructure requirements and potential impacts? Are the estimates of site capacity justified? Are the expected timescales for development realistic? Are the site development template requirements – both general and site specific – justified, consistent with national policy and would they be effective?

East Hanney

(a) North of East Hanney (80 homes)
(b) North East of East Hanney (50 homes)

2.1 East Hanney is a relatively small settlement with few services and facilities, yet is proposed for 130 homes on two sites in LPP2.

2.2 Sites at East Hanney were mainly selected (it would seem) because "*they are not located within the Oxford Green Belt*" .

2.3 East Hanney ranked 18th out of 19 'large villages' in the 'Town and Village Facilities Study (Update February 2014)'. The LPP1 Inspector's Interim Response raised questions about East Hanney: "*the mobile library service at East Hanney has been withdrawn meaning that, in terms of the findings of the Town and Village Facilities Study (2014), the settlement would no longer be classed as a larger village*". He requested information from VWHDC, but no response is recorded.

2.4 East Hanney is some 16km distant from Oxford with only road access (A338) and one bus stop, with no rail access available. It is described in the original Topic Paper 2 (March 2017) as being "*relatively remote from Oxford and the Science Vale*". TP2 (October 2017) states that there are "*set to be enhancements to the bus service*"[1] but provides no information.

2.5 Several sites have already been permitted at East Hanney without adding any schooling capacity or other services.

[1] TP2 Appendix B p27

2.6 There must be serious doubt that East Hanney is suitable as a sustainable settlement for growth and it is not therefore suitable for inclusion in LPP2. It is not a sustainable settlement justifying any expansion.

2.7 The North site is identified in the LPP2 Appendix at p24 and referenced EHAN_C in Topic Paper 2 Appendix 2b. The North-East site is referenced EHAN_D.

2.8 Site specific comments in TP2 Appendix B for both sites include[2]

- *Drains to Wantage waste water treatment works.*
- *The system is above capacity, is unlikely to cope with increased demand and reinforcement to the sewer network would be required.*

2.9 This infrastructure deficit raises concerns about deliverability and viability of this small site.

2.10 The assessment for the North site also notes: "*Environmental health • Road noise from A338"* but scores this as 'green' factor, when it should be amber or red.

(c) ***East of Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor (in Fyfield and Tubney Parish)*** (600 homes)

2.11 Kingston Bagpuize is a village with a population of 2,349 and 935 households . It seems an unsustainable and unlikely location for near-doubling its size with a further 880 dwellings.

2.12 It is scored 10th out of 19 in large village rankings[3], dropping a point from the 2013 ranking because "*No medical facilities present*."

2.13 Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor is some 14 km from Oxford, without any rail access.

2.14 The site is identified in LPP2 Appendix p17 and KBAG_A in Topic Paper 2 Appendix 2b. The 600-home site is located next to the 280-home site of LPP1 Policy CP 4 and 8.

2.15 The assessment[4] includes "*Drains to the Kingston Bagpuize waste water treatment works, • The system is above capacity, is unlikely to cope with increased demand and reinforcement to the sewer network would be required.*" This is the same adverse comment given to the East Hanney

[2] TP2 Appendix B p27
[3] Town and Village Facilities Study (Update February 2014)
[4] TP2 Appendix B p46

sites, but in this case is scored 'green' rather than East Hanney's 'yellow', so demonstrating inconsistency. This infrastructure deficit raises concerns about deliverability and viability.

2.16 Primary schooling seems to be a problem[5] (emphasis in bold):

> *Primary education: needs to be considered in context of other growth at Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor. The existing village school (John Blandy) is in the process of* ***expanding from 1 form entry to 1.5 form entry. This expansion is only sufficient to meet the needs of already permitted housing growth. The school's site area would not support further expansion of the school, unless a land swap can be agreed to extend the school site****. Development could provide a new primary school for the village, providing longer-term flexibility to accommodate additional demand, should this be needed.*

2.17 The East Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor site is not suitable for inclusion in LPP2.

(d) South East of Marcham (90 homes)

2.18 Marcham is scored 15th out of 19 'large villages' in the Town and Village Facilities Study (Update February 2014)'

2.19 This Marcham site scores many 'yellows' in Topic Paper 2 Appendix 2b pp55/56 including impact on a SAC and SSSIs, traffic, sewerage capacity, school capacity, high voltage line crossing the site and proximity to Air Quality Management Area .

2.20 Marcham is 11km from Oxford and is not on a railway line with a station. The high amber score for factors for landscape, ecology, transport, water and waste water, and environmental health suggest that this is not a sustainable site.

2.21 It is not a sustainable location but LPP2 para 2.47 highlights that Marcham's main attribute is that it is "*not located in the Oxford Green Belt*".

[5] TP2 Appendix B p46

3.0 REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES

3.1 This Statement and that for Matter 5 (Dalton Barracks) are critical of the sites proposed in LPP2, and the Statement for Matters 1 and 2 are critical of the exclusion of Green Belt sites in the Abingdon/Oxford Fringe in favour of unsustainable sites, most on the edge of small villages with little non-car access to Oxford.

3.2 It is therefore important to submit a reasonable alternative to the Examination.

3.3 Radley is the only settlement in the Abbingdon/Oxford sub area to have a railway station which connects to Oxford, and London.

Radley South

3.4 The site is known as Radley South which was originally identified for release from the Green Belt in the Submission version of LPP1. Ultimately the site was not carried forward into the Adopted LPP1, but not for any criticism of the site itself, but rather the relucance of the Inspector to support the exclusion of sites which were not actively identified for specific development.

3.5 The Radley South Site should be identified in LPP2. It has clear development potential and the 'exceptional circumstances' now exist for its release from the Green Belt. It was recognised by VWHDC as being suitable for release from the Green Belt in the LPP 1 submission, supported by the Kirkham study[6], and is relatively free from constraints. It is well connected by public transport (train and bus) thus reducing travel by car which is a principal theme of the Plan. It is well located to make a contribution to Oxford's unmet housing needs and can deliver housing quickly so contributing to the 5-year housing land supply. It was recognised by name by the LPP1 Inspector as being "*suitable for development*"[7]. Concerns about transportation and access, the SAMs and capacity[8] have been addressed. The site can make a valuable and early contribution to District housing land supply and to the unmet housing needs of Oxford.

3.6 Radley is regarded as "one of the Vale's most sustainable villages with a good range of services and facilities, and is close to additional facilities in Abingdon-on-Thames" . It is served by a

[6] Vale Of White Horse District Council Green Belt Review 2014
[7] LPP1 Inspector's Interim Response 7.6.16 para 8.13
[8] Radley South was only excluded by VWHDC from LPP1 because it thought (erroneously) that the site capacity was below 200 homes

railway station (Oxford 10 mins, Didcot 8 mins and Paddington 1hr 25 mins) and a good bus service (Oxford and Abingdon) both within close walking and cycling distance from the site. It follows that it should be a leading location for more growth to serve the Oxford Housing Market Area.

3.7 The criticisms of the Radley South site are unjustified. It is noteworthy that it was originally recommended by VWHDC in the submitted LPP1 to be taken out of the Green Belt, based on a detailed assessment commissioned by the Council. It was also specifically identified by name by the LP1 Inspector as being "suitable for development". The response to the criticisms is:

- the site is not 'extremely sensitive' in landscape terms and makes very limited contribution to the Green Belt, as evidenced in the Kirkham Study
- the SAMS on adjoining sites are below ground and development of the site would have no material impact, and there is no evidence to suggest that any features extend onto this site
- access improvements, already proposed by Radley NW and in the Neighbourhood Plan would serve the site well.

3.8 The benefits of the Radley South site are that it would swiftly deliver some 240 homes within the 5-year housing supply period. Other potential benefits include

- provision of a new Village Hall on a new site to the east of Radley South
- provision for pitches, cricket ground, allotments, children's play area etc. as shown on the Concept Plan (Appendix 1).
- availability of the current Village Hall site for development could enable Radley College to fund the new building and provision of the facilities
- additional funding, doubling that from Radley NW, could contribute to items including the Radley Lakes proposal in the Neighbourhood Plan and to education provision
- possibility of land being made available to implement the proposed connection to Audlett Drive, also in the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.9 The Radley South Site should be recognised as an allocation site in Core Policies 4a and 8a. Because of the inadequacies identified in the Submitted LPP2, the 'exceptional circumstances' now exist for the Green Belt boundary to be amended with the allocation of Radley South in PP2. Without it, the Plan would be unsound.

3.10 The original submissions on the LPP2 Publication Version are Appendix 1 to this Statement and the Concept Masterplan is Appendix 2.

Matter 4

VWH Local Plan Examination Part 2

Gardner Planning Ltd on behalf of AWEL

APPENDIX 1

Radley South

Extract Radley South Submissions Publication LPP2

EXTRACT FROM SUBMISSIONS ON LPP2 PUBLICATION VERSION (ORIGINALLY SECTION 5)

1.0 THE EXCLUSION OF RADLEY SOUTH

Need for inclusion of Radley South

1.1. The shortfall in housing numbers has been identified in Section 2 above. There is criticism of the sites identified in the Abingdon and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area in Sections 3 and 4. As explained in Section 4, there is no robust evidence that the Dalton Barracks site will deliver the 1,200 homes proposed in the PVLP2 in the plan period.

1.2. As a consequence, the Plan would be unsound unless additional or alternative sites are identified, and the 'exceptional circumstances' do exist to release Green Belt sites. Radley South is a strong proposal, for all the reasons set out below, and will deliver some 240 homes in a sustainable location which will serve the needs of Oxford as well as the District.

The Sustainability of Radley

1.3. Radley is an acknowledged sustainable settlement which is entirely suitable for making a meaningful contribution to the housing shortfall in the AOF Sub-Area and the unmet needs of Oxford.

1.4. Radley is described as "*one of the Vale's most sustainable villages with a good range of services and facilities, and is close to additional facilities in Abingdon-on-Thames*"[1]. Radley is a sustainable settlement served by a main line railway station (Oxford - 10 minutes, Didcot - 8 minutes and Paddington - 1hr 25 minutes) and a good bus service (Oxford and Abingdon). It is acknowledged in the VWHDC Cabinet Response (7.8.15) that Radley is rightly described as one of the "*most sustainable larger villages"* having "*excellent public transport links to Oxford, with a railway station*". This was endorsed

[1] Draft Local Plan Supporting Paper Feb 2014 p34

by the LP Part 1 Inspector: Radley is "*a 'larger' village with local services, including a station with direct trains to Oxford, Didcot and London*"[2]

1.5. NPPF para 14 provides the Government position:

> *At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking….*

1.6. Core Policy 8 of the LP1 identifies the main settlements in the Abingdon and Oxford Fringe Sub-Area as follows:

> *Market Town: Abingdon-on-Thames*
> *Local Service Centre: Botley*
> *Larger Villages: Cumnor, Drayton, East Hanney, Kennington, Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor, Marcham, Radley, Sutton Courtney, Steventon and Wootton*

1.7. The Officer's Response to Cabinet (7.8.15) noted the *most sustainable larger villages:*

> Cumnor
> Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor
> Radley
> Wootton

LP1 Inspector's Response

1.8. Regarding the sustainability of Radley, the LP1 Inspector said in his final Response (emphasis added in bold)[3]:

> ***As a 'larger' village with local services, including a station with direct trains to Oxford, Didcot and London,** there is little to support the argument that Radley could not appropriately accommodate the 240 or so dwellings envisaged for Site 4.*

1.9. The LP1 Inspector also expressed views on likely settlements suitable for sustainable growth in his Interim Response[4]:

[2] Inspector's Final Response 30.11.16 para 83
[3] LP Part 1 Inspector's final Response para 83
[4] Inspector's Interim Findings 7.6.16

[other villages in the AOF Sub-Area] *would not be a sustainable location to provide for the majority of the sub-area's housing requirement, most of which is likely to arise from people currently living in* ***Abingdon, Botley, Radley and Kennington***[5]*.*

the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe sub-area contains the Vale's largest settlement (Abingdon) in addition to the local service centre of Botley and a number of ***larger villages, including Radley and Kennington***[6]*.*

It is the desirability of providing for housing needs in the Abingdon-on-Thames and Oxford Fringe sub-area, in ***close proximity to Abingdon and Oxford City****, that is* ***fundamental to my conclusion that exceptional circumstances exist to justify removing from the Green Belt*** *the sites* [the Part 1 sites] *indicated above.*[7]

However, in addition, the plan proposes to delete from the Green Belt some 15 or so other parcels of land at ***Botley, Chawley, North Hinksey, Cumnor, Wootton and Appleton****; land which would* ***not be allocated for any particular use***[8]

it ***cannot reasonably be argued*** *that deletion of land from the Green Belt at* ***Botley, Cumnor, Wootton and Appleton*** *would be necessary to ensure logical, defendable and permanent Green Belt boundaries at Abingdon, Radley and Kennington*[9]*.*

I am therefore ***unconvinced*** *by the confidence expressed by the Council at the hearings that the land proposed to be deleted from the Green Belt at* ***Cumnor, Botley, Appleton and Wootton*** *would be sufficient to provide for the yet to be allocated Vale's own housing needs*[10]

the exceptional circumstances *necessary to justify removing from the Green Belt the parcels of land at* ***Botley, Cumnor, Wootton and Appleton do not exist***[11]

I conclude that the ***exceptional circumstances*** *necessary to remove* ***Farmoor*** *from the Green Belt* ***do not exist****.*

several other parcels of land at Abingdon, Kennington and Radley are proposed to be deleted from the Green Belt but not allocated for any purpose. In terms of the land at Abingdon and Kennington I can see some sense in its removal from the Green Belt, in the context of the removal of housing sites 1,2,3 and 4 and the desirability of producing logical and permanent Green Belt boundaries. ***I also note***

[5] ditto para 8.2
[6] ditto para 8.1
[7] ditto para 8.4
[8] ditto para 8.4
[9] ditto para 8.5
[10] Inspector's Interim Findings 7.6.16 para 8.8
[11] ditto para 8.10

that there is potential for housing development on the land at Radley, although, *as detailed in section 13 below****, there is not an identified need for this at the present time***[12]***.***

Given the prospect of a further Green Belt boundary review, ***permanence of the submitted plan's Green Belt boundary at Abingdon, Kennington and Radley cannot currently be guaranteed. It would therefore make sense to retain these parcels of land in the Green Belt until either a further Green Belt review has taken place or there is some certainty that such a wider review will not be necessary.***[13]

Green Belt Release

1.10. The version of the Local Plan Part 1 which was submitted to the Secretary of State included proposals for several sites to be released from the Green Belt including Radley South in addition to the four that were eventually allocated for development. These are identified in the VWHDC submission to the Examination[14]. The Inspector concluded that there was little merit for the sites at Botley, Cumnor, Wootton, and at (smaller villages) Appleton and Farmoor.

1.11. The Inspector's Response rejected the release from the Green Belt of all 18 sites identified in the Submission Plan because no development proposals were made and the 'exceptional circumstances' had not been demonstrated. However, he said:

Retaining these parcels of land in the Green Belt now ***would not prevent their deletion from Green Belt through the 'Part 2' plan*** *or any other local plan or local plan review,* ***if the necessary exceptional circumstances were to be demonstrated****.*[15]

1.12. That is now the position: Oxford's unmet housing needs have been calculated which, when added to the existing shortfall, now present the grounds for releasing further land for housing development. The LP1 Inspector's Response also said[16]:

[12] ditto para 8.13
[13] ditto para 8.13
[14] Appendix 3
[15] Inspector's Final Response 30.11.16 para 91
[16] ditto para 100

> *However, given the prospect of a further Green Belt boundary review,* ***permanence of the submitted plan's Green Belt boundary*** *at Abingdon, Kennington* ***and Radley cannot currently be guaranteed****.* ***Indeed, there is interest in developing some of this land for housing to assist in contributing towards Oxford city's unmet housing needs, although this remains a matter for the 'Part 2' plan****. It would therefore make sense to retain these parcels of land in the Green Belt until either a further Green Belt review has taken place or there is some certainty that such a further review will not be necessary.*

1.13. The 'exceptional circumstances' now exist for the Green Belt boundary to be amended with the allocation of Radley South in PVLP2.

The Case for Radley South

Introduction

1.14. The merits of the Radley South site were noted by the LP1 Inspector as having "*potential for housing development*".[17]

1.15. TP2b states[18]

> *Well linked to Oxford, given a train station, with good public transport and cycling connections. Well related to the larger village of Radley,*
>
> *although an open landscape in the Oxford Green Belt that contributes strongly to Green Belt purposes and is highly sensitive in landscape terms* (see landscape and Green Belt comments below)
>
> *Radley has a rail station (30 mins max frequency), and current allocated development may lead to a 4/hour bus service. Radley is within easy cycling distance of Oxford, Abingdon-on-Thames and Culham. Well related to the larger village of Radley, and existing bus stop.*

1.16. Radley South was identified for Green Belt release in the Submission version of LP1, although the Inspector stated that whilst none of the GB release sites should be allocated for development, that position should be reviewed in LP2. It was recommended for Green Belt release in the Vale of White Horse District

[17] Inspector's Interim Response 7.6.16 para 8.13
[18] TP2 Appendix 2b p61

Council/Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd Green Belt Review Phase 3 Response (February 2014), identified as site 14[19]. Comments in the Kirkham Report on the Radley sites are:

- *Key landscape characteristics contributing to the adjacent Green Belt: No significant features.*
- *The new boundary of Area 14 follows open farm tracks.*

Landscape

1.17. TP2 2b states as follows[20]:

> *There is no defined boundary to the south and west, leaving it exposed to views from the immediate and wider landscape.*
> *Thames Path National Trail potentially leads to sensitivities.*

1.18. Radley South has a clear boundary to the west which is Thrupp Lane. Landscaping to the west, south and east (although the railway runs some 120m to the east) will establish clear boundaries and screen the site from those directions.

1.19. The site is a flat with very little vegetation and extensive planting, including boundaries, would enhance its character and define the urban area. It lies within unremarkable landscape and a natural southern extension to Radley between Thrupp Lane and the Oxford railway. New peripheral planting would frame and define the extended Radley urban area, as recommended by Kirkham. The site is not within any designated or recognised landscape area. The Kirkham Response recommended:

> *Area 14 is an open landscape. Particular care needs to be taken to enclose the area in substantial tree belt and woodland planting to ensure that any new built form does not have an adverse impact on the open character of the adjacent Green Belt.*

[19] Appendix 2 Vale of White Horse District Council/Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd Green Belt Review Phase 3 Response (February 2014) extract
[20] TP2 Appendix 2b p61

1.20. Whatever the TP2b sentence means, the Thames Path National Trail is at least 1.4 km to the south of the site, so the development of Radley South cannot possibly affect the Trail's enjoyment.

Historic Environment

1.21. TP2b states as follows:

> *Situated between the Settlement Sites "North of Wick Hall" Scheduled Monument and "East of Goose Acre Farm" Scheduled Monument. It is possible that nationally significant archaeological remains extend into the proposed site, and the intervisibility between the sites may be of significance. Historic England consider it likely that development of this site would be harmful to the significance of the Monuments.*

1.22. Historic England's comments are not recorded in Local Plan 2031 Part 2 Consultation Statement Appendix 3. Neither of the Inspector's Reports on LP1, when the Radley South site was examined, mention the Historic England comments.

1.23. The two SAMs do not constrain development of the site. Even though it is only "*possible*" that remains extend into the site, their status has been examined and was referred to in the original Design Concept[21] for the site as follows:

> There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) located to the east and west of the site. Both are entirely sub-surface archaeological remains of former settlements visible only as cropmarks. The SAM to the east is known as the Settlement East of Goose Acre Farm. The entry in the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record states that it is a *cropmarked complex of ditches and enclosures...probably Bronze Age like others in the vicinity. Cursory trawl of arable produced no surface material. No features but flints recovered during watching brief. Romano-British pottery found in large quantities... a watching brief recovered Romano-British and post medieval pottery and ceramic building material along with prehistoric worked flints. A multi-phase series of ditches and pits, apparently part of Romano-British settlement was also encountered. Condition Report in 2009 as extensive significant problems i.e. under plough, collapse and the trend declining. Principal vulnerability is arable ploughing.*

[21] Site at Gooseacre Farm, Thrupp Lane, Radley. Prepared for Arnold White Estates Ltd. by Built Form Resource Ltd August 2014

The asset to the west is the Settlement Sites N of Wick Hall and the description is similar to that for the site East of Goose Acre Farm.

Development of the Gooseacre Farm site would not result in any harm to these assets.

1.24. The conclusion is that these are entirely sub-surface archaeological remains of former settlements only visible as cropmarks and that development of the site would not result in any harm. There is no evidence that the underground archaeology extends under Radley South. If there was, the site would have been included in the original designation.

Access

1.25. TP2b states

Access could be provided via Thrupp lane, although significant off-site infrastructural improvements would likely be required.

1.26. Access would be via Thrupp Lane which will be improved, connecting to the new roundabout junction for Whites Lane, Foxborough Road and Thrupp Lane as described in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan[22]. Pedestrian and cycle access can be provided through the existing residential area as shown in the Concept Plan (Appendix 2).

1.27. The site is well located for access by sustainable transport, Radley having an excellent bus and train service both in easy walking and cycling distance from the site. This would be compliant with LP1 Core Policies 33 and 35.

1.28. Buses depart to Oxford every 15 minutes[23] and direct trains every hour throughout the day - both modes which Radley South can access on foot and cycle. The site offers the potential to make up some of Oxford's shortfall and sustain its economic viability by providing homes for Oxford workers which will not require them to

[22] Second Consultation Draft September 2017 NP pp 38,39
[23] The no. 35 service

commute by car on the roads and will not add to the parking pressure within Oxford itself. Very few other potential sites of this size offer that connectivity.

1.29. AWEL commissioned an expert report by Stuart Michael Associates which has previously been submitted to VWHDC[24]. The SMA report demonstrates that Thrupp Lane is able to be widened and improved to provide adequate access to the development.

1.30. The SMA report also deals with the 'Public Rights of Way' impact. It shows that the cycle and pedestrian links which serve Radley will actually be improved as part of the development. The site directly accesses the SUSTRANS National Cycle Network (Route 5) which is a positive advantage.

1.31. Improvements to cycle and pedestrian links would be of benefit to Radley generally:

> *Pedestrian and cyclist links can be provided to Gooseacre. There is also scope to significantly enhance the cycleway network. A shared footway/cycleway from the site's eastern boundary across the promoter's land to the east and link to its access onto Bowyer Close*
>
> *This would provide an attractive recreational corridor and also provide a convenient link for railway commuters to and from the proposed development. Bowyer Close also connects to Stonhouse Crescent and from there to Foxborough Road and Radley railway station.*
>
> *The shared footway/cycleway would effectively provide a connecting route to the National Cycleway Route 5 on Thrupp Lane. Consideration could also be given to making up a track that runs north – south from Bowyer Close to Foxborough Road.*[25]

1.32. The Appraisal demonstrates that the existing junction from Thrupp Lane onto Foxborough Road is perfectly adequate for the increased traffic envisaged, although improvements have now been put forward in the NP. Indeed, the development of

[24] Site at Gooseacre Farm Thrupp Lane, Radley. Prepared for Arnold White Estates Ltd. & B. Colton (the Co-Promoters) by Stuart Michael Associates Limited December 2014
[25] Appendix 3 SMA Response paras 2.11 - 2.13

Radley South clearly benefits accessibility around the village, in particular for cyclists and pedestrians.

Public Services

1.33. TP2B states:

> *Radley CE Primary School would need to expand from its current 0.5 form entry size.*
>
> *It is important to consider the cumulative impacts of combinations of sites in the vicinity of Abingdon-on-Thames – both in the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire - for secondary school planning. If the cumulative impacts of new sites on top of already planned growth trigger a need for a new secondary school, sufficient sites should be allocated in the area to provide sufficient mass for a viable new secondary school.*

1.34. There is no problem with expanding the primary school, which is already envisaged for the Radley North-West development.

1.35. The allocation of Radley South would therefore be a positive for provision of extra secondary schooling by adding to 'sufficient mass'.

Environmental Health

1.36. TP2b states

> *Possible contaminated land (plastic works formerly lies adjacent to part of the site).*

1.37. There is no evidence of contamination. The actual site of the former works has already been developed for residential use with no problems found.

Green Belt

1.38. TP2 2b states as follows[26]:

[26] TP2 Appendix 2b p62

The site contributes to the overall aims and purposes of the Oxford Green Belt and any development within the site would harm the integrity of the wider Oxford Green Belt.

1.39. This comment is a general one which has been made against all the Green Belt sites in Appendix 2b, it is not specific to Radley South.

1.40. However, the Kirkham Report (commissioned by VWHDC) recommended that the site be released from the Green Belt, so disputing Appendix 2b on the nature and character of this specific site.

Benefits

1.41. Radley South, with a gross area of some 8.6ha gross, 7.9ha net could accommodate some 240 homes[27].

1.42. There would be other benefits to offer the community: a new site to the east of Radley South of a size suitable to relocate and build a new Village Hall, and make provision for pitches, cricket ground, allotments, children's play area etc. as shown on the Concept Plan (Appendix 2). This would help to resolve some of the issues identified in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The availability of the current Village Hall site for development could enable Radley College to fund the new building and provision of the facilities.

1.43. Additional funding, doubling that from Radley NW, could contribute to items including the Radley Lakes proposal in the Neighbourhood Plan and to education provision. There is also a possibility of land being made available to implement the proposed connection to Audlett Drive, also a desired outcome identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.

[27] LP Pt1 Core Policy 23 requires a minimum density of 30 dwellings per ha

Delivery

1.44. The site is in single ownership and obviously deliverable in the short-term. If the allocated Radley NW site were developed in tandem it would be possible to align S106 Agreements to include contributory funding/provision to benefit Radley, rather than a two-stage approach where such arrangements would be disjointed over time. Also, Radley NW may perceive it to be an unfair burden if it has to fund everything knowing that Radley South would later be developed. If the sites are developed in tandem, then proper provision can be made from the outset.

Conclusion

1.45. The Radley South Site should be identified in LP2. It has clear development potential and the 'exceptional circumstances' now exist for its release from the Green Belt. It was recognised by VWHDC as being suitable for release from the Green Belt in the LP Pt 1 submission, supported by the Kirkham study, and is relatively free from constraints. It is well connected by public transport (train and bus) thus reducing travel by car which is a principal theme of the Plan. It is well located to make a contribution to Oxford's unmet housing needs and can deliver housing quickly so contributing to the 5-year housing land supply. It was recognised by name by the LP1 Inspector as being "suitable for development". Concerns about transportation and access, the SAMs and capacity[28] have been addressed. The site can make a valuable and early contribution to District housing land supply and to the unmet housing needs of Oxford.

[28] Radley South was only excluded by VWHDC from LP1 because it thought (erroneously) that the site capacity was below 200 homes

Matter 4

VWH Local Plan Examination Part 2

Gardner Planning Ltd on behalf of AWEL

APPENDIX 2

Radley South

Concept Plan

Radley South proposed development

Other available land in the same ownership

Current Village Hall and playing fields

Proposed boundary planting

Proposed street trees

Proposed allotments

Proposed playing fields

Proposed open space

Proposed residential

Proposed footpath/cycleway

Sustrans Route 5

Vehicular access

Pedestrian access

Land South of Radley

Arnold White Estates Ltd

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01865 261456, Oxford Centre for Innovation, New Road, Oxford OX1 1BY
info@builtformresource.com www.builtformresource.com